



The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition SONNET LESSON PLANS



Week 5: Workshopping the Sonnets

Note: 1-2 x 50 minute class periods (depending on the number of students in the class).

- **What's On for Week 5 and Why?**

This week you hold a sonnet workshop, where the students recite their complete sonnets in front of each other and offer feedback to their peers. This type of activity allows the students to: assess their progress, benefit from seeing their classmates' work and set personal goals for their formal recitations.

- Students will:
 - Present their complete sonnets to each other;
 - Actively observe each other's presentations;
 - Provide constructive feedback to their peers;
 - Write goal-setting notes to themselves about what they want to work on before the formal presentation next week.

- **Which Standards Are Highlighted?**

Common Core English Language Arts:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-12.4
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.9-12.5

NCCAS National Theatre Education:

- NCCAS.NSTE.9-12.2 & 7

- **What Will You Need?**

- An open workshop (that can comfortably accommodate the whole class)
- *Sonnet Feedback Handout* (enough copies so that every student can complete one form for themselves and one form for each of their classmates)
- *Sonnet Goals Handout* (a copy for each student)
- A set of numbered cards (enough for every student in the class to choose one)

- **What Will You and Your Students Do?**

1. Gather the students in a circle. Remind them that the purpose of this class is to provide each other with feedback on their sonnet presentations, which will help them take their work to the next level. This feedback session also helps prepare them for next week's school competition dress rehearsal.
2. Pass out copies of the *Sonnet Feedback Handout* (enough so that each student has one sheet for each of their classmates). Review the directions on the handout. Remind them to provide two pieces of feedback for each classmate:
 - a. one specific comment about a strength of the recitation;
 - b. one specific and constructively worded suggestion for a way to improve the recitation.Encourage the students to address areas that are identified on the *Sonnet Scoring Rubric*.
3. Play a few warm-up games with the students (those which ideally warm-up up their bodies and voices and allow them to relax). Note: Check online for theatre games and tongue twisters you can use.
4. Students sit back down and randomly draw the numbered cards to determine students' order of presentation.



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5. Each student introduces and recites their complete sonnet for the class. (If the class is large, break it down into two or more smaller groups.) While the student recites, the others each fill out a *Sonnet Feedback Handout* on this presentation.
 6. Allow the audience a minute or two between presentations to complete their feedback sheets.
 7. Students share their feedback on the presentations with each other.
 - a. If time permits, have the students share **some** of the feedback aloud (both strengths and suggestions) at the conclusion of each presentation. It is helpful for everyone to hear the comments, as the students learn from each other's feedback. Then have the students give each other the written feedback at the **end** of class.
 - b. If time does not permit the spoken feedback, simply have the students give each other the written feedback at the end of the session.
 8. Pass out the *Sonnet Goals Handout*.
- **How Did It Go?**

To assess this lesson plan in your classroom, ask yourself:

 1. Did each student present their complete sonnet for their peers?
 2. Was growth evident in each student's presentation?
 3. Did each student provide positive, constructive feedback for their classmates?
 - **What's for Homework?**

Ask each student to complete the following assignments for next week:

 1. Review all peers' written feedback.
 2. Complete the *Sonnet Goals Handout*.
 3. Incorporate constructive peer feedback into their sonnet presentation.
 4. Prepare for the formal recitation next week.